

Planning Commission

Remote Hearing – August 24, 2005

11-GP-2005

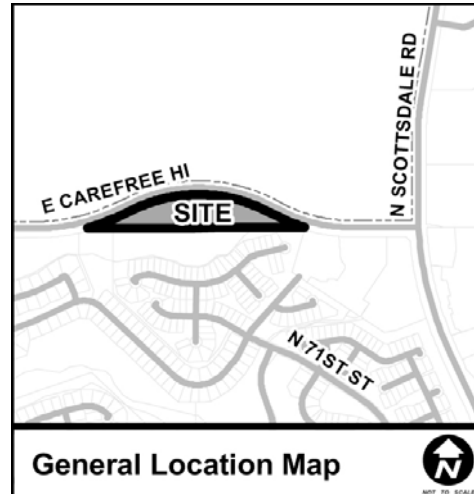
General Plan Review

Introduction

Case 11-GP-2005 is a request for an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Element. The property is located along the Carefree Highway west of Scottsdale Road and includes approximately 7.39 acres of land. There is a concurrent rezoning case (20-ZN-2005) associated with this requested General Plan amendment.

Major General Plan Amendment

The Growing Smarter Acts (state statutes) required cities to establish criteria for major amendments to the General Plan. The Scottsdale City Council established the criteria for a major General Plan amendment in February 2001. Those criteria are a part of the city's General Plan, and include a land use change matrix, a property size criteria, and Character Area and Water/Wastewater Infrastructure criteria. (See attachment #7) If a proposed change meets any of the criteria, the proposal constitutes a major amendment to the General Plan. A land use change from Suburban Neighborhoods to an Office designation is considered a major amendment, regardless of the size of the parcel.



Current Conditions/Background

This property is designated Suburban Neighborhoods on the General Plan Land Use Map. Surrounding this parcel on the west, south, and east are Suburban Neighborhoods designation. North of this parcel is the Town of Carefree with the equivalent of a Rural Neighborhoods designation. No character area study has been approved, and no neighborhood plans have been proposed or completed for this area.

Description of Proposal

The applicant is proposing the following amendment to the General Plan:

- Land Use Element designation amendment from Suburban Neighborhoods to Office (Minor).

The Suburban Neighborhoods designation provides for a range of medium to small-lot single-family neighborhoods or subdivisions. These land uses are designated to accommodate a mix of dwelling types and densities for a variety of neighborhood and environmental conditions, and other uses that support residential land uses, such as

shopping and small business. Where Suburban Neighborhoods are designated, the corresponding residential zoning regulations may allow a limited number of non-residential uses, such as places of worship, neighborhood parks, schools, etc., that provide community assets and services essential to balanced residential areas.

Densities in Suburban Neighborhoods are usually more than one house per acre, but less than eight houses per acre. This category also includes some townhouses and can also be used for small lot single-family homes such as patio homes. The terrain should be relatively flat, or gently sloping, to accommodate this density. Preservation of environmental features (particularly in desert settings near the mountains) is a key consideration and in the past has often been accommodated through master-planned communities or clustering.

The Office designation “includes a variety of office uses. Minor offices have a residential scale and character, often in a campus setting. Minor office uses generate low to moderate traffic volumes, and could be located along collector as well as arterial streets. They are generally one-story structures, with at-grade parking (Zoning categories determine buildings heights and setbacks). Strict development and landscaping requirements will protect adjacent residential uses.”

The applicant has indicated that his proposal will be for a minor office land use.

General Plan Analysis

Land Use Element and Economic Vitality Element:

Two of the goals of the Land Use Element involve maintaining a balance of land uses for residential and supporting non-residential uses that will maintain the city’s economic base and encourage land use patterns that reduce automobile trips. Approaches discuss encouraging land uses that contribute to the character of the community and sustain and viable economic base. The Economic Vitality Element also addresses this issue when it encourages locating neighborhood serving non-residential areas that are in proximity to neighborhoods and residential concentrations.

There are two distinctive types of office developments that may occur as a result of an Office land use designation: Major and Minor. Major offices have more than 1 story and may have underground parking; this use would characteristically be found in a central business district, major commercial core, or freeway interchange. Minor offices have a residential scale and character, as described above and are intended to blend with and be compatible with surrounding residential uses. Through the zoning process the distinction of Major versus Minor office development for an individual site becomes apparent. However, at the time of General Plan land use designation, there are some site characteristics that can be used as indicators as to whether a site is viable for Major or Minor offices. This site is environmentally constrained with natural features that limit its development potential; is located within the ESL overlay district; and is surrounded by single-family residential development; there is no freeway interchange, commercial core,

or central business district nearby – thus Minor office General Plan, zoning and development would be more appropriate than Major office for this site.

Open Space and Recreation Element:

The Open Space Map of the Open Space and Recreation Element of the General Plan designates Carefree Highway, this application's northern boundary, as a Scenic Corridor. The Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines should be applied during the development process with a 100' scenic buffer designated. No development is permitted within this 100' buffer other than trails, multi-use pathways, and regional drainage facilities.

Additionally the Open Space Map indicates that a "Major Wash Corridor" crosses this site. The following approach listed under goal number one should be considered:

- "Permanently secure an interconnected open space system to maintain visual and functional linkages between major city open spaces. This system should include significant Scottsdale landmarks, major drainage courses, regional linkages and utility corridors."

Character and Design Element:

The Character and Design Element of the General Plan designates this site within the Suburban Desert Character Type. This Character type typically contains "...medium density neighborhoods that include a variety of commercial and employment centers and resorts. A wide variety of recreational and leisure opportunities are integrated into the fabric of these districts. Pedestrian and bicycle linkages from neighborhood to neighborhood and from neighborhood to commercial, cultural, educational and recreational components are vital in weaving these areas into a livable community."

The Streetscape Map designates that the subject area streets should have a Natural Streetscape. Natural Streetscape areas should be composed of plants that are native to the local desert with densities of plantings that are similar to natural conditions. The General Plan suggests that the streetscape theme be applied to areas within the public right-of-way as well as the area between the right-of-way and building setback line. The Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines should be implemented along this property's northern boundary, and these guidelines could be used to guide the remaining street frontage landscape themes.

Preservation and Environmental Planning Element:

The Preservation Element contains Goals that specifically discuss safeguarding the natural environment and achieving a sustainable balance between the conservation, use, and development of our natural resources. There is a major wash corridor on this property that will require sensitive treatment throughout development and planning of this site.

Specific Approaches in this Element include:

- Preserve the unique, rare and significant features of Scottsdale's natural environment.
- Encourage developments to retain and integrate the desert ecosystem where appropriate.

- Integrate environmental quality protection into all phases of local planning and policy implementation.
- Encourage retention of the 100-year floodplains as natural drainage ways without permanent construction, rechannelization (where possible), and bank clearing or straightening.

Community Mobility Element:

One of the goals of the Community Mobility Element is to relieve traffic congestion. To that end it is recommended that the city emphasize “work, live, and play” relationships in land use decisions that will reduce the distance and frequency of automotive trips.

Another goal discusses the relationship and balance of land uses within general areas that will help reduce the demand on transportation systems. The Element recognizes that different areas of the city have different character and distinction of mobility needs.

Mobility choices that reflect the character and dominant lifestyle within a neighborhood should be encouraged, for example, in more rural, equestrian areas of the community, links to the citywide and regional trail systems would be desired. And yet another statement of the Mobility Element discusses promoting non-motorized travel for short neighborhood trips such as homes to retail or service centers.

Key Issues

- Neighborhood office services should be provided in close proximity to residents.
- The existing single-family residences are isolated from other residences and not within a neighborhood community context.
- The properties front onto a minor arterial street, a street classification appropriate for office uses.
- Carefree Highway is a designated Scenic Corridor and the Scenic Corridor Design Guidelines should be followed.
- Protection of the major wash corridor on the east side of the property is encouraged.

Community Involvement

The applicant has conducted outreach to inform the surrounding community of the proposed General Plan amendment. The applicant held one open house, and a letter of information was sent to nearby property owners. The response to the proposal has been predominately opposed, with limited support. The community does not feel that there is need for office on this property.

Conclusion

This proposal is an infill development of a property surrounded by a master planned community on three sides and the neighboring community of Carefree. If care is taken in limiting the zoning to a minor office district and site design is done with sensitivity to the surrounding uses and the site’s environmental features, an office designation would be appropriate in this area.

Staff Contacts:

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Approved by:

Randy Grant
Chief Planning Officer

Attachments:

1. Applicant's Project Narrative
2. Context Aerial
3. Close-up Aerial
4. Existing General Plan Land Use Map
5. Proposed General Plan Land Use Map
6. Community Input
7. Major General Plan Amendment Criteria



SAM J. WEST III
ARCHITECT, AIA

August 3, 2005

City of Scottsdale
Planning and Development Services
% Kira Wauwie
7447 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, Arizona

Re: General Plan Narrative
Windmill Pass
6839 East Carefree Highway
Scottsdale, Arizona
Project Number: 11-GP-2005

Kira:

Per Staff request the previously submitted nattative has been restructured and is as follows.

This project is being proposed in response to the needs generated by existing and future homes constructed in the area.

- A. Value Scottsdale's unique Character and lifestyle:
- I. This project fulfills the goals of preserving and enhancing the unique desert nature this area of Scottsdale.
 - II. The proposed land use is in response to the S-R zoning district created withing our Zoning ordinances.

Windmill Pass Page 1 of 6

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SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA
85258-2467

11-GP-2005

TELEPHONE: 480.994.5728
TELEFAX: 480.994.5718
EMAIL: SAM@SAMJWEST.COM

8-4-05

ATTACHMENT #1

B. Support Economic Vitality:

- I. Research on existing Class "A" space proved there is a need for professional space. This space will create new jobs and increase school taxes and increase tax revenue for the city. New jobs and the associated salaries will strengthen Scottsdale. These increases will help to forestall tax increases to all property owners in Scottsdale. This type of use is most desirable and has the least negative impact on the city.

C. Enhance the Neighborhood:

I. Community Involvement:

Citizens have attended open houses to discuss this project. Numerous comments have been made concerning several issues including height, lighting, noise, health, property values and this project being compatible with this area and being in conformance to city planning goals.

All of these issues have been addressed or are being addressed through alteration of the project, determination of the facts and continual dialog with neighbor's to refine the project.

II. Housing:

This project will enhance existing and future homes by providing for a location for professional services in close proximity to the existing residential neighborhoods. The project will increase property value and corresponding tax base.

III. Neighborhood:

The goal of the project design is to create a residential look and feel that is compatible with existing homes. It is multiple buildings of Santa Fe Style. There are three small parking lots, some of which are smaller than the drives and parking found in some larger homes.

One of the benefits of the locations and orientations of the buildings is it provides a very effective way of reducing existing noise generated by traffic on Carefree highway. The density of landscaping will further the sound deadening effects of the buildings. This design has the potential to reduce the noise level by up to twenty five percent.

D. Open Space:

I. Open Space and Recreation:

The project has in excess of fifty-seven percent open space. This is over twice what regulation calls for. This open space will serve to make this project more residential in nature.

Buildings will cover approximately twenty-three percent of the site.

Limiting the building height will reduce the visual impact of the buildings as they relate to the site.

II. Preservation and Environmental Planning:

One of the primary goals of this project is keeping and enhancing the extensive significant desert vegetation existing on the site. In most areas the vegetation is dense enough to prevent seeing through the site. The project design embraces keeping, or relocation of all significant vegetation. One design goal is to create a sense of inseparability between landscaping and buildings.

The existing overhead utility lines will be removed and new lines placed underground.

E. Seek Sustainability:

I. Cost of Development:

The above average cost of development is driven by several factors, some of which are:

The project is planned to be Class "A". Part of this is to attract and keep the type professional user this area demands.

Most medical service facilities have a substantial amount of Class "A" space .

Medical and Professional services are long term uses. Long term uses increase the stability neighborhoods.

Two thirds of the parking is under ground.

II. Growth Areas:

The North Scottsdale, Carefree area anticipate approximately eight thousand additional homes to achieve build out. Most of these homes will be located east of Pima Road, in Scottsdale. The remaining one thousand or so homes will be in north Carefree. The completion of these areas should not have a large impact on affect this area. As the build out occurs a large portion of the construction traffic that creates most of the noise on Carefree Highway will be reduced.

III. Public Service and Facilities:

There will be no request for public funds associated with water, sewer or other utilities improvements.

The size of this project will not materially affect existing public services.

F. Advance Transportation:

I. Community Mobility:

The four existing drives accessing Carefree Highway will be eliminated. Proposed street improvements would include providing asphalt left turn lanes to the north and south and a right turn for eastbound Carefree Highway. These improvements are to be located at the Stagecoach and Project Entrance intersection. These improvements will increase safety and reduce existing congestion at the intersection. A byproduct of this will be a reduction of construction traffic noise.

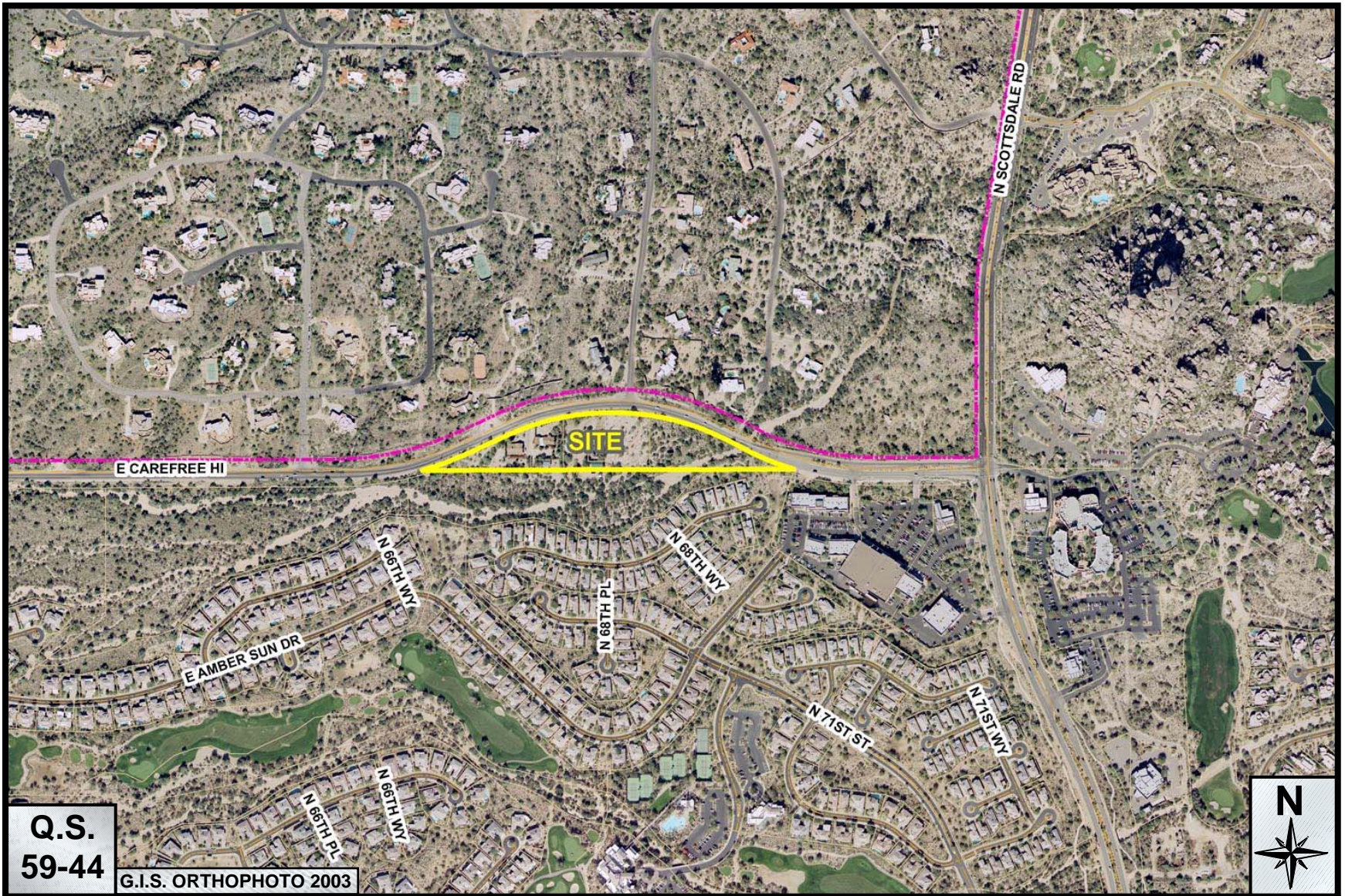
This project will reduce through traffic by providing services within the neighborhood.

Travel time to other locations will be reduced as a result of services being available to those in the immediate area. This travel reduction will reduce pollution, lost time, wear and tear on public infrastructure, while increasing jobs. A long drive can be replaced with a walk, a bike ride, drive a golf cart or ride a horse or a short trip by car to this location.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam J West', with a large, stylized loop and a horizontal line extending to the right.

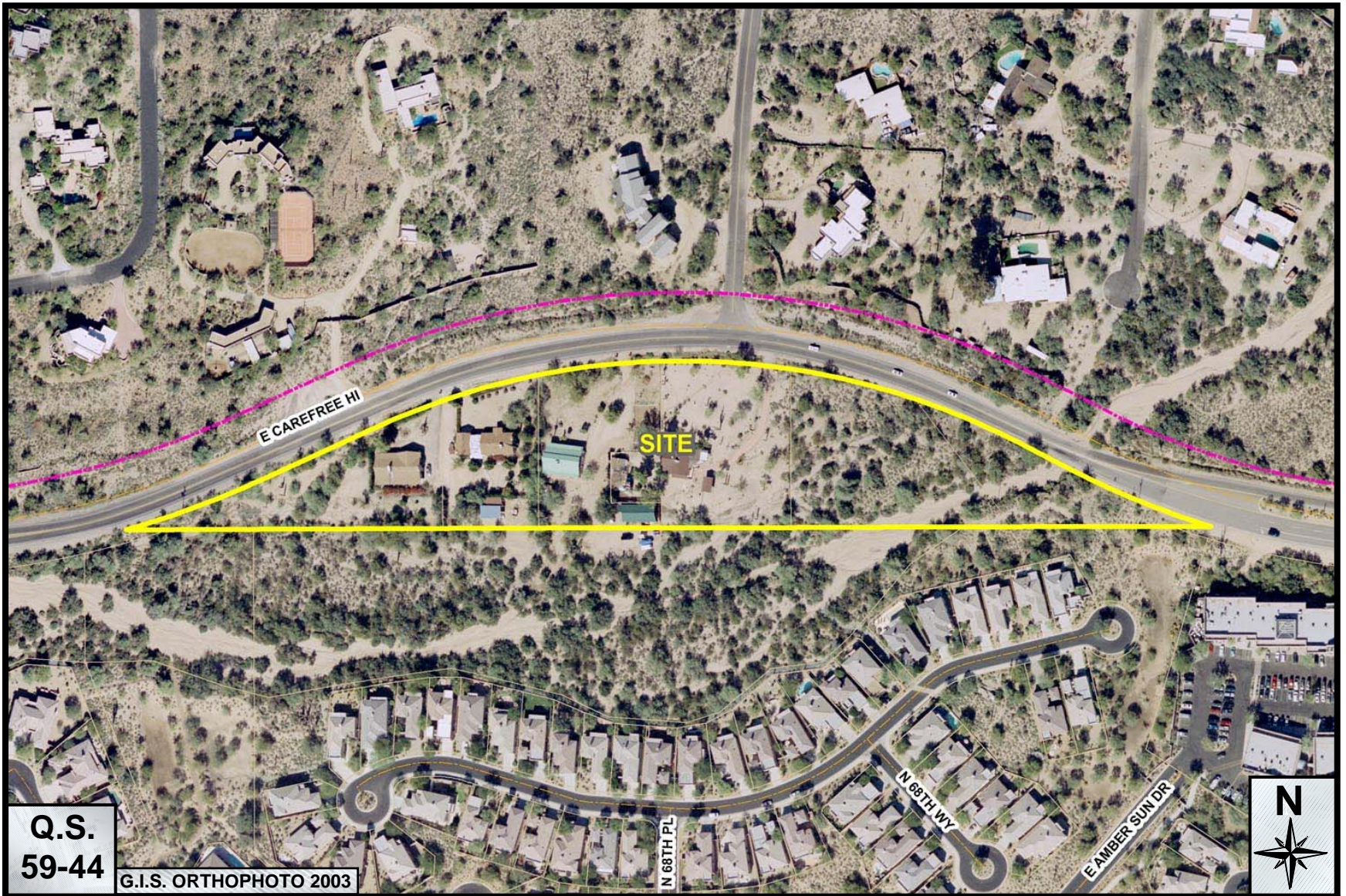
Sam J West, Architect



Windmill Pass

11-GP-2005

ATTACHMENT #2

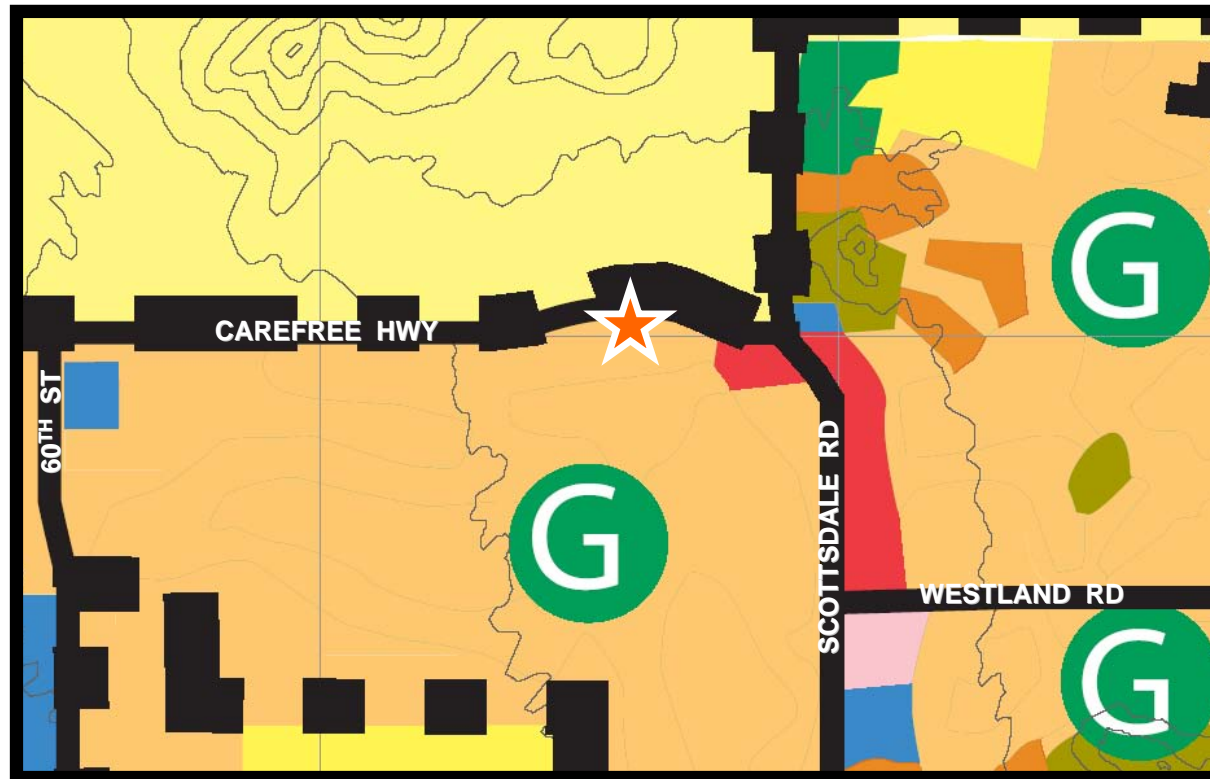


Windmill Pass

11-GP-2005

ATTACHMENT #3

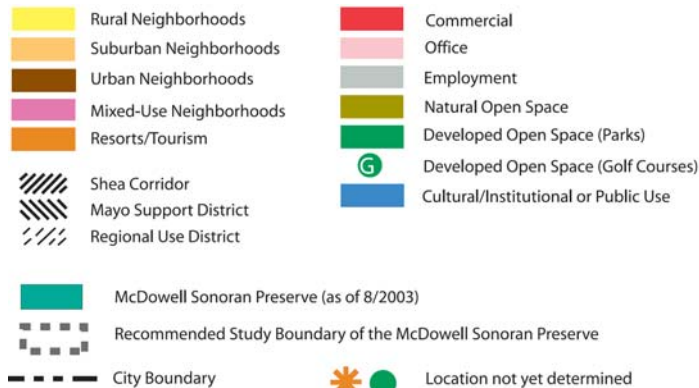
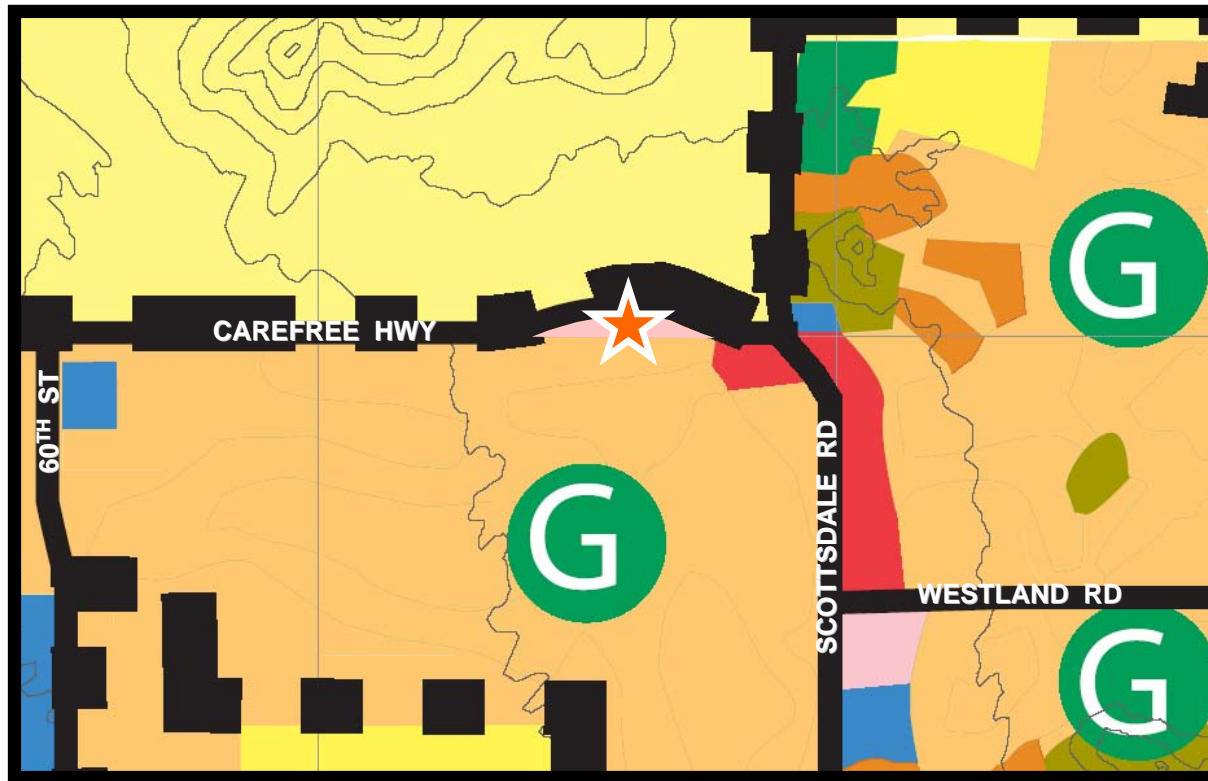
General Plan (Existing)



11-GP-2005
ATTACHMENT #4

Adopted by City Council October 30, 2001
Ratified by Scottsdale voters March 12, 2002
revised to show McDowell Sonoran Preserve as of May 2004
revised to reflect General Plan amendments through June 2004

General Plan (Proposed)



11-GP-2005
ATTACHMENT #5

Adopted by City Council October 30, 2001
Ratified by Scottsdale voters March 12, 2002
revised to show McDowell Sonoran Preserve as of May 2004
revised to reflect General Plan amendments through June 2004

Attachment #6 Citizen Involvement

The above attachment is on file at the City of
Scottsdale Current Planning office,
7447 E Indian School Road, Suite 105.

Criteria for a Major Amendment to the 2001 Scottsdale General Plan
(City Council approved 10/30/01)

Scottsdale's Mission: In guiding the formation of the major amendment criteria, it is important to consider the major mission elements of the city, these being –

- a. Preserve Scottsdale's unique southwestern character,
- b. Plan for and manage growth in harmony with the natural desert surroundings,
- c. Promote the livability of the community,
- d. Enhance and protect neighborhoods, and
- e. Ensure and sustain the quality of life for all residents and visitors.

Proposed changes to the land use element of the city's General Plan that compromise the spirit and intent of these mission statements will qualify for consideration as a major amendment to the General Plan.

Scottsdale's Land Use Element: It is important that as proposals are considered in regard to the following criteria that the values and structure of the land use element be used as a guide. These values are an important part of the city's land use plan:

- a. Land uses should respect the natural and man-made environment,
- b. Land uses should provide for an unsurpassed quality of life for both its citizens and visitors,
- c. Land uses should contribute to the unique identity that is Scottsdale,
- d. Land uses should contribute to the building of community unity and cohesiveness,
- e. Land uses should work in concert with transportation systems in order to promote choice and reduce negative impacts upon the lifestyle of citizens and the quality of the environment,
- f. Land uses should be balanced in order to allow for the community to provide adequate live, work and play opportunities, and
- g. Land uses should provide opportunities for the design of uses to fit and respect the character, scale and quality of uses that exist in the community.

It is recognized that a proposed change of land uses within any given portion of the city may have a substantial impact upon the balance of land uses within the city as a whole. The General Plan Land Use Element was formulated and adopted with full consideration of the character and balance of land uses that are appropriate within all distinct areas of the city. Beyond this level of consideration, the plan considers the relationships between and among the various planning areas and studies that have helped to build the plan. This leads to a balance and pattern of land uses that reflects the community's values, aspirations and the city's stated mission.

Character of Land Uses: A change in the planned land uses may have a substantial impact upon the city by transforming the character of the land uses within a given planning area. The character of the land uses may be indicated by the physical intensity of the use in terms of massing, height or relationships between uses; the blending of different types of uses and the patterns and scale inherent to each; or the relative amount, type and placement of open spaces. Significant changes in the established land use character will be considered in determining whether or not a proposal is a major amendment.

Criteria: An amendment to the Land Use Element of Scottsdale's General Plan shall be defined as a major amendment if it meets any one of the following criteria:

1. Change in Land Use Category

A change in the land use category on the land use plan that changes the land use character from one type to another as delineated in the following table:

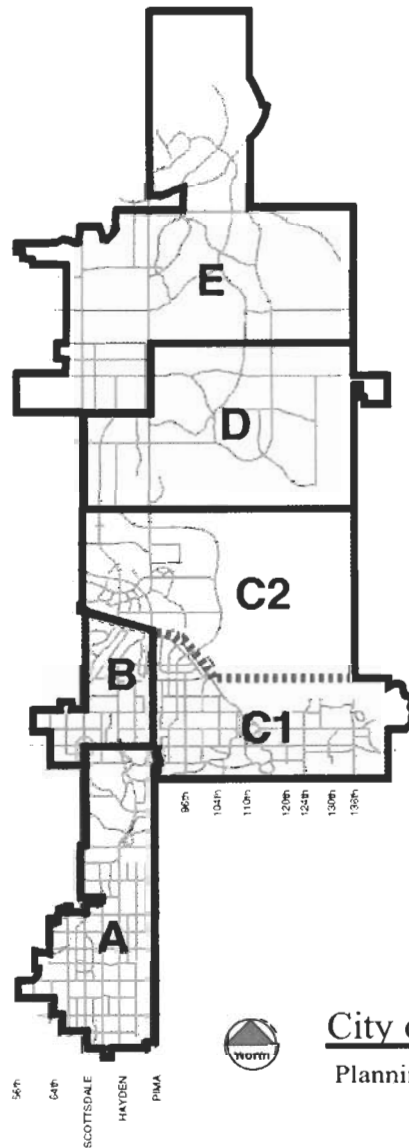
	<i>To:</i>	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E
<i>From:</i>	Land Use Plan Category					
Group A	Rural Neighborhoods Natural Open Space		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Group B	Suburban Neighborhoods Developed Open Space Cultural/ Institutional or Public Use			Yes	Yes	Yes
Group C	Urban Neighborhoods Resorts/Tourism	Yes				Yes
Group D	Neighborhood Commercial Minor Office Minor Employment	Yes	Yes			Yes
Group E	Commercial Office Employment Mixed Use Regional Use Overlay	Yes	Yes			

2a. Area of Change Criteria

A change in the land use designation that includes the following gross acreages:

- * Planning Zones A, B 10 acres or more
- * Planning Zone C1, C2, D and E 15 acres or more

JENNY LYNN
CIRCLE MOUNTAIN
HONDA BOW
ROCKAWAY HILLS
DESERT HILLS
JOY RANCH
STAGECOACH PASS
CAREFREE HWY.
DOVE VALLEY
LONE MOUNTAIN
DIXALETA
DYNAMITE
JOMAX
HAPPY VALLEY
PINNACLE PEAK
DEER VALLEY
BEARDSLEY
OUTER LOOP
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT BLVD
GREENWAY
THUNDERBIRD
SWEETWATER
CACTUS
CHOLLA
SHEA
DOUBLETREE RANCH
McCORMICK
INDIAN BEND
McDONALD
CHAPARRAL
CAMELBACK
INDIAN SCHOOL
THOMAS
McDOWELL
McKELLIPS



ZONE A includes the Downtown Business/Entertainment District and the most mature neighborhoods in the community

ZONE B includes the Scottsdale Airport, the fastest growing and one of the three largest employment centers in the metropolitan area

ZONE C covers the East Shea area, McDowell Mountain Ranch, DC Ranch, and Greyhawk, all major master planned developments (C1 & C2 are divided by the CAP Canal and Thunderbird Road)

ZONE D encompasses the Pinnacle Peak, Desert Highlands and Troons communities, and large undeveloped tracts

ZONE E includes Terra Vita, the Boulders, Desert Mountain, Legend Trails, the 15,000-acre tract of State Trust Lands, and other undeveloped lands



City of Scottsdale

Planning Zones

2b. *Acreage Criteria Overriding Incentives*

Certain exceptions to these criteria (2a.) are considered to be in the interest of the general public and in keeping with the mission and values of the community. A proposal that includes any of the following conditions will not be considered as a major amendment:

- A property owner initiated decrease in the residential land use category of units planned by the land use element, or
- A proposal for a change in the land use designation that results in no increase in the planned number of dwelling units and includes at least 30% more Natural Area Open Space than is required by the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance for the property and that is:
 - of substantial size, that being at least seven or more contiguous acres, and protected in such a manner so as to be designated with the land use category of Natural Area Open Space
 - and where such open space protects sensitive natural features and is visually and/or physically accessible to the general public and does not include lands contained within scenic corridors or vista corridors, or
- A proposal to change the land use category to Cultural/ Institutional with a municipal, public school or non-profit cultural facility when such a proposed facility is not adjacent to a single-family land use designation (Rural or Suburban Neighborhoods) or does not share direct access to any street that has single-family residential driveway access within one half (1/2) mile of the proposal.
- A proposal within the Downtown Plan area that maintains the same development standards type (e.g. Type 1, Type 1.5 or Type 2) and contains no more than fifteen (15) gross acres or less.

3. *Character Area Criteria*

Character areas have been added to the city's planning process in order to recognize and maintain the unique physical, visual and functional conditions that occur in distinct areas across the community. The city recognizes that these form a context that is important to the lifestyle, economic well being and long term viability of the community. These areas are identified by a number of parameters including but not limited to building scale, open space types and patterns, age of development and topographic setting.

If a proposal to change the land use category has not been clearly demonstrated by the applicant to comply with the guidelines and standards embodied within an approved character area plan it will be considered as a major amendment. (Note: The character area plans that qualify for consideration as of November, 2000 include the Desert Foothills Plan, Dynamite Foothills Plan, Cactus Corridor Plan and Downtown Plan.)

4. *Water/Wastewater Infrastructure Criteria*

If a proposal to change the planned land use category results in the premature increase in the size of a master planned water transmission or sewer collection facility it will qualify as a major amendment.

If a project applicant wishes to appeal the designation of a General Plan major amendment, the Comprehensive Planning Division Planning Director, or the position equivalent, will evaluate the appeal and make a major amendment determination.